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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COUNCILS

The Mayor's Office establishes five Community Engagement Councils in order to better serve Chicago's diverse immigrant communities

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced the official launch of five Community Engagement Councils that will better serve Chicago's diverse immigrant communities. The Councils will ensure the Mayor's Office gains a deeper understanding of the rich histories and community needs and continue the work to eliminate barriers facing immigrant groups that live and work in the city.

"We live in a city that is built in large part by brilliant immigrant communities and residents who come from all walks of life," said Mayor Lightfoot. "As we continue our fight for equity and inclusion, it is imperative that we be intentional about bringing these individuals to the table and making sure their interests are always represented. That's why I could not be prouder to announce the establishment of these five new councils, which will place our city's values of equity and inclusion further at the root of our policymaking processes here in Chicago."

The Community Engagement Councils will serve as lines of communication where the City shares vital information relating to key priorities and available opportunities. Additionally, council members will provide insight, feedback, and concerns about the impact of City policies, practices, and programs. Also, the establishment of the respective councils will keep the City abreast of important cultural events, holidays, and celebrations, allowing the City to plan and coordinate events in a culturally competent manner.

The Councils will focus on communities including:

- African and Caribbean Immigrant Engagement Council
- Asian American and Pacific Islander Engagement Council
- Eastern European Engagement Council
- Middle Eastern, North African, and Near East Engagement Council
- Polish American Engagement Council



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Members of each Council represent the diverse background each community represents in the City of Chicago. Members include attorneys, educators, business owners, and activists—each creating opportunities for the Mayor’s Office to have meaningful engagement with residents that have historically been excluded from the conversation.

“We applaud the creation of these engagement councils and how they will allow diverse voices, including those from the Polish American community, to offer guidance and insight on ways City policy and resources can better improve the quality of life for all Chicagoans,” said Maureen Pikarski, Attorney at Gordon & Pikarski.

“The creation of these councils will allow communities who have deep histories in Chicago but are often underrepresented to have a seat at the table and provide guidance and feedback on City policies and programs that affect our communities,” said Grace Chan-McKibben, Executive Director of Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community. “It is an important step in ensuring that the voices of our communities are heard in the City’s work towards equity and inclusion.”

“We celebrate the launch of these councils as a way to help bring together diverse voices of the African and Caribbean diasporas,” said Dr. Kiros Teowolde. “The African and Caribbean Council allows us to share with the City ways to better improve relations with communities and celebrate their unique cultures. We are excited for all the good work that’s to come.”

“The Middle Eastern/North African engagement council allows leaders in our communities to share feedback and help the City engage with communities that are historically underrepresented,” said Salman Aftab, President of A-Z Medical Services Corp. “We celebrate the launch of these Councils and Mayor Lightfoot’s goal of ensuring all voices are heard.”

“We applaud Mayor Lightfoot’s efforts to celebrate and ensure immigrant communities are heard, said Neno Djordjevic, Vice President for Strategic Partnerships of Serbian American Leadership Conference. “Eastern Europeans have deep roots in the City of Chicago, and we are honored to work alongside the Mayor’s Office in serving our community.”

For more information about the Community Engagement Councils and application information, please email the Office of New Americans (officeofnewamericans@cityofchicago.org) and visit on [Twitter](#).

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